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ENG 4760-001: Special topics in professional writing

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ENG 4760-001 Course Policy
Special Topics in Professional Writing:
Traditions of Argumentation and Proposal Writing
 Noon MWF, 3120/3130 Coleman

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 Office Hours: MWF-8:30-9:30 am, TuTh-8:30-11:00 am
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“Whoever does not study rhetoric will be a victim of it.”

-Ancient Greek wall inscription

“Having to say something is a very different matter from having something to say.”

-John Dewey, *How We Think*

Texts:

- Heinrichs, Jay. *Thank You For Arguing: What Aristotle, Lincoln, and Homer Simpson Can Teach Us About the Art of Persuasion*.
- Johnson-Sheehan, Richard. *Writing Proposals*, 2nd ed.
- Ramage, John D., John C. Bean, and June Johnson. *Writing Arguments: A Rhetoric with Readings*, 7th ed

Recommended Websites:

- Purdue University's Online Writing Lab (OWL): <http://owl.english.purdue.edu>
- Figures of Speech Served Fresh: <http://www.figarospeech.com>
- Annenberg Political Fact Check: <http://www.factcheck.org>

Materials:

Writing instruments, paper, paper clips, a college dictionary, a typewriter or computer, and other appropriate supplies

Course Description:

In this course we will study classical rhetoric, its beginnings in ancient Greece and its continuation in the Roman Republic, and how the precepts and principles from Isocrates, Aristotle, Cicero, and Quintilian are crucial for anyone who attempts to persuade and argue in academia, courts of law, and the workplace. In addition, we will examine alternate ways of looking at argumentation by learning from the work of Stephen Toulmin, Carl Rogers, and contemporary scholars in composition and rhetoric. With a strong grounding in rhetoric and argumentation, the course will practice important rhetorical concepts through writing arguments, especially proposals. The course will explore argument-based documents that are commonplace in business and professional settings, such as recommendation reports, practical proposals, policy proposals, and grant proposals. Students will produce a rhetorical evaluation paper that examines the effectiveness of an argument early in the semester, but the bulk of the course will revolve around writers composing their own arguments and proposals. In addition, students will lead discussion of readings throughout the semester, and participants will provide informal presentations from time to time.

Student Learning Objectives for this Course:

Students will:

- Refine writing and editing skills learned in previous writing courses
- Grow as independent writers and thinkers
- Show the ability to read critically
- Become skilled in working with others in the writing process

- Demonstrate the ability to do effective research
- Distinguish between objective and subjective writing
- Distinguish facts from opinions, inference, and judgment
- Recognize common logical fallacies
- Be able to annotate, paraphrase, summarize, and synthesize written material accurately
- Develop research skills, including effective use of source materials and the principles of documentation
- Recognize multiple perspectives while discovering and developing one's own perspective
- Write well-reasoned arguments with sufficient evidence
- Recognize the responsibility of technical and professional writers to communicate clearly and concisely to satisfy an audience's need for information
- Understand the value of professional and technical writing for readers in the world of work
- Demonstrate college- and professional-level writing produced through the process of prewriting, drafting, revising, editing, and proofreading
- Write purposeful adequately developed paragraphs and sentences that are direct, economical, free of ambiguity, and structurally appropriate for the ideas expressed and for the audience to whom it is directed

Expected Performance Outcomes:

Students will exhibit the ability to:

- Analyze the need for a document in terms of a rhetorical situation to be addressed, the context of the writing project, the purpose of the document, and the audience's needs
- Select an appropriate document format and writing style for a given writing situation
- Select and design simple graphics and integrate them logically into written text
- Revise and edit for clarity and correctness, and produce professional-looking final documents
- Produce rhetorically and argumentatively sound arguments that effectively grapple with counterarguments
- Distinguish between objective and subjective language
- Conduct library, electronic, and field research effectively
- Document sources appropriately within documents
- Work effectively and ethically in a group writing project and group presentation
- Write clear, concise prose in Edited American English

Success in this course includes (1) finding your own creative ways to make topics and assignments personally interesting--especially if your first instinct is to label them "boring" or "too hard," (2) believing that you have something worthwhile to say, and (3) expressing it after you've debated/pondered/ listened/ read/ explored beyond the surface.

Course Requirements:

Class consists of in-class writing activities, discussion of assigned works, peer review sessions, short writing assignments, and informal presentations. And pop quizzes might happen from time to time. There will be four larger writing assignments. I also have a participation grade and a writing process grade. Active and constructive class participation can make a positive impact on your overall grade.

If you have a documented disability and wish to receive academic accommodations, please contact the Office of Disability Services (581-6583) as soon as possible.

Your Instructor:

If you are having any trouble with the material covered in this course, or if you simply want reassurance that you are on the right track, please do not hesitate to visit my office. Many times a short visit to go over a paper or to clarify a concept can save you time in the long run and improve your chances of success in

this course. In addition to being in my office during the posted hours, I can also make arrangements to meet at other times to better accommodate your schedule.

Attendance, Late Work Policy, and Expectations:

Students are expected to attend every class. However, as detailed in the EIU Undergraduate Catalog, “properly verified absences due to illness, emergency, or participation in an official University activity” are recognized. When an absence is unavoidable, students are responsible for acquiring missed course materials and the information supplied in class (sickness or emergency), submitting an assignment at a time in accordance with the instructor (University activity), or using one of their late assignment opportunities (sickness, emergency, or University activity).

You have the opportunity to turn in two late assignments of your choosing. If you have to turn in an assignment late, you must communicate with me about your situation prior to the class time that the assignment is due. This can be done by a phone conversation, an exchange of emails, or talking with me in my office. Unless it’s an extreme situation, I typically grant an extension of a day or two for late assignments.

I do not have an attendance policy that reduces students’ overall grades based on absences. But keep in mind that this course is a class in writing, one where students will be actively composing work and collaborating with others, so if excessive absences happen (five or more absences is excessive to me), those days missed are usually reflected in the quality of work produced by a student, and they also affect a student’s participation grade.

Although I keep accurate records of your grades and progress, I also expect you to keep track of your grades. You should document all your point totals for essays, journals, quizzes, and other assignments throughout the semester to give yourself an idea of your grade in the course. It is your education, and I believe students should take an active role in assessing how they are doing in their courses.

If there is an extreme discrepancy between in-class and out of class work, I reserve the right to base a student’s grade on in-class work alone.

A Note on Professionalism:

Unless otherwise indicated, all class work must be typed. If an assignment isn’t typed, I will not accept it.

Revision:

Students can revise the first three larger writing assignments. Time allotted for revision is usually one week from the day they are ready to be passed back in class. I will not grade revisions unless the original graded document is submitted with it. If you choose to revise, it should help your overall grade; however, I expect deep revision, not just surface editing.

Academic Honesty and Plagiarism

Here is the official statement on plagiarism by EIU’s English Department: “Any teacher who discovers an act of plagiarism—“The appropriation or imitation of the language, ideas, and/or thoughts of another author, and representation of them as one’s own original work” (*Random House Dictionary of the English Language*)—has the right and responsibility to impose upon the guilty student an appropriate penalty, up to and including immediate assignments of a grade of F for the assigned essay and a grade of F for the course, and to report the incident to the Judicial Affairs Office. Respect for the work of others should encompass all formats, including print, electronic, and oral sources.”

Here is an explanation of plagiarism from my previous English department that explains this important concept:

Plagiarism

To present someone else's work or ideas as one's own is plagiarism. A student commits plagiarism by

- copying, word for word, someone else's writing without putting that passage in quotation marks and identifying the source.
- taking someone else's writing, changing some of the words, and not identifying the source;
- taking someone else's ideas or organization of ideas, putting them into his/her own words and not identifying the source;
- having someone else change the student's writing—a tutor, friend, or relative, for instance—and creating the impression that this is the student's own work; or
- purchasing or downloading papers or passages from the Web.

As a rule of thumb, if you have to have a source before your eyes as you write, you need to copy it accurately, put quotation marks around it, and acknowledge your source. I reserve the right to ask for pre-writing, drafts, etc. or faculty review to prove that it is the student's own work. As most instructors are, I am involved in a "network" to catch plagiarism, and I sometimes randomly—and sometimes not so randomly—check students' work to make sure it is their own. If there is a huge difference between the quality of in-class work and out-of-class work, I reserve the right to base the final grade on in-class work alone. In this class, there is a social contract between the instructor and students that the work submitted will be the students' own documents, not someone else's work. Do your own writing.

Class Conduct:

My classroom community demands good manners, careful listening, respect for diverse backgrounds and opinions, and equal time for everyone who wants to share his or her perspective. In sum, I expect students to act in a mature and collegial manner. Student-learners should come to class having read the material, eager to participate, and ready to write.

Good Guidelines to Abide by in Any College Course:

1. Come to class on time and stay the entire period.
2. When we discuss a reading or writing assignment, have the materials in front of you on your desk. When we are doing in-class writing, be prepared to actively brainstorm, draft and compose your ideas. And bring texts, paper, and pen
3. Have an opinion and support your opinion with details and examples.
4. Play well with others. Respect others' opinions and be open to them. Actively help your peers in collaborative activities like peer review.
5. When working in a group, stay on the assigned tasks.
6. Do not carry on side conversations with other students when the instructor or a student "has the floor" during class.
7. General rudeness and disrespect is not tolerated.
8. Cell phones and pagers need to be turned off.
9. No profanity.
10. No personal grooming.
11. No sleeping. If you do, I will ask you to leave.
12. Wait until I dismiss you before packing your book bags to leave.

If you have concerns about this list or any other aspect of the class, please arrange to discuss the matter with me during my office hours. Similarly, if circumstances arise that will impact your performance in this class, let me know as soon as possible.

Composition of the Overall Grade
(all assignments and point totals are tentative)

Participation **50** points
Discussion, in-class writing, small group work, informal presentations

The Writing Process **20**
5 pts. available for each Peer Review session

Quizzes **tbd**

Shorter Writing Assignments **110**

| | |
|---|----|
| Memo of Introduction | 10 |
| <i>Thank You...</i> Memorandum I | 10 |
| <i>Thank You...</i> Memorandum II | 10 |
| <i>Thank You...</i> Memorandum III | 10 |
| <i>Thank You...</i> Memorandum IV | 10 |
| <i>Thank You...</i> Memorandum V | 10 |
| Prospectus for the Civic Proposal | 20 |
| Letter of Intent for the Grant Proposal | 20 |
| Evaluation Memorandum | 10 |

Larger Writing Assignments **500**

| | |
|------------------------------|-----|
| Rhetorical Evaluation Report | 100 |
| Recommendation Report | 100 |
| Civic Proposal | 150 |
| Grant Proposal | 150 |

680 points possible

Grading Scale for Larger Writing Assignments:

| | | | |
|-------------|------------|------------|------------|
| 100-92% = A | 89-88 = B+ | 79-78 = C+ | 69-68 = D+ |
| 91-90 = A- | 87-82 = B | 77-72 = C | 67-62 = D |
| | 81-80 = B- | 71-70 = C- | 61-60 = D- |

Overall Grading Scale:

| | |
|-------------|------------------|
| 100-90% = A | 69-60 = D |
| 89-80 = B | 59 and below = F |
| 79-70 = C | |

ENG 4760 Syllabus

All assignments and due dates are tentative

WA = *Writing Arguments*

WP = *Writing Proposals*

TY = *Thank You for Arguing*

* = handout

| | |
|--------|---|
| M 1-7 | Introductions and Introduction to the Course |
| W 1-9 | Preface and Ch. 1 TY Ch. 1 WA Memo of Introduction due |
| F 1-11 | Ch. 2 TY Ch. 2 & 4 WA |
| M 1-14 | Ch. 3 TY Ch. 5 & 6 WA <i>Thank You...</i> Memorandum I due |
| W 1-16 | Ch. 4 TY Ch. 7 WA |
| F 1-18 | Ch. 5 TY Ch. 8 WA Introduction of Rhetorical Evaluation Report assignment |
| M 1-21 | MLK Holiday—No Class |
| W 1-23 | Ch. 6 TY Ch. 10 WA |
| F 1-25 | Ch. 7 & 8 TY Appendix One WA <i>Thank You...</i> Memorandum II due |
| M 1-28 | Ch. 9 TY Anthology readings tbd |
| W 1-30 | Ch. 10 TY Anthology readings tbd |
| F 2-1 | Ch. 11 TY Anthology readings tbd |
| M 2-4 | <i>Peer Review of the Rhetorical Evaluation Report</i> |
| W 2-6 | Ch. 12 TY Ch. 1 WP Rhetorical Evaluation Report due Introduction of Recommendation Report Case assignment |
| F 2-8 | Ch. 13 TY Ch. 2 & 3 WP <i>Thank You...</i> Memorandum III due |

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|-----------|--|
| M 2-11 | Ch. 14 TY |
| | Ch. 4 & 5 WP |
| W 2-13 | Ch. 15 TY |
| | Ch. 6, 7, & 8 WP |
| F 2-15 | Lincoln's Birthday—No Class |
| M 2-18 | <i>Peer Review of Recommendation Report</i> |
| W 2-20 | Ch. 16 TY |
| | Ch. 10 WP |
| | Introduction of the Civic Proposal assignment |
| F 2-22 | Ch. 17 TY |
| | Individual and Group Brainstorming |
| | Recommendation Report due |
| M 2-25 | Ch. 18 & 19 TY |
| | <i>Thank You... Memorandum IV due</i> |
| W 2-27 | Ch. 20 & 21 TY |
| \ | Ch. 11 WP |
| F 2-29 | Ch. 22 TY |
| | Ch. 12 WP |
| | The Logistics of the Cover Letter |
| M 3-3 | <i>Prospectus due</i> |
| | Anonymous Mid-term Student Feedback |
| W-F 3-5-7 | No class—Mandatory Conferences |

Spring Break

| | |
|--------------|--|
| M 3-17 | Ch. 23 TY |
| | Introduction of the Grant Proposal assignment |
| W 3-19 | Ch. 24 & 25 TY |
| F 3-21 | <i>Peer Review of the Civic Proposal</i> |
| | <i>Thank You... Memorandum V due</i> |
| M 3-24 | Civic Proposal due |
| | Planning, Audience Analysis, & Finding Funding Sources |
| W 3-26 | Writing a Letter of Intent and Managing Your Time Line |
| F 3-28 | Evaluation, Dissemination, and Sustainability Sections |
| M 3-31 | Budgeting, the Cover Letter, the Executive Summary, and the Abstract |
| W 4-2 | No Class—Research/Writing |
| F 4-4 | No Class—Research/Writing |
| M 4-7 | tbd |
| W 4-9 | Letter of Intent or Prospectus for the Grant Proposal due |
| Th/F 4-10/11 | No class—Mandatory Conferences |

M 4-14 Putting the Proposal Together & Appendices
W 4-16 Preparing for the Review Process
F 4-18 *Peer Review of the Grant Proposal*

M 4-21 **Grant Proposal due**
W 4-23 tbd
F 4-25 tbd

Final: Evaluation Memo due